WOMBLE BOND DICKINSON

OUR TRAINING CONTRACT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Application Requirements – for our England offices

Q: Can I apply if I have an LPC?

A: Yes. We currently accept applications from candidates qualifying via both the LPC route and the SQE route. Whilst we cannot fund the LPC, if you have already completed the LPC, or are eligible to qualify under the SRA's transitional arrangements, you may be able to qualify through the LPC route rather than the SQE route. To be eligible, you must have started, completed, or accepted an offer for a Qualifying Law Degree (LLB) or Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) before 1 September 2021. Eligible individuals must complete their period of recognised training and apply for admission as a solicitor by 31 December 2032, in accordance with SRA requirements.

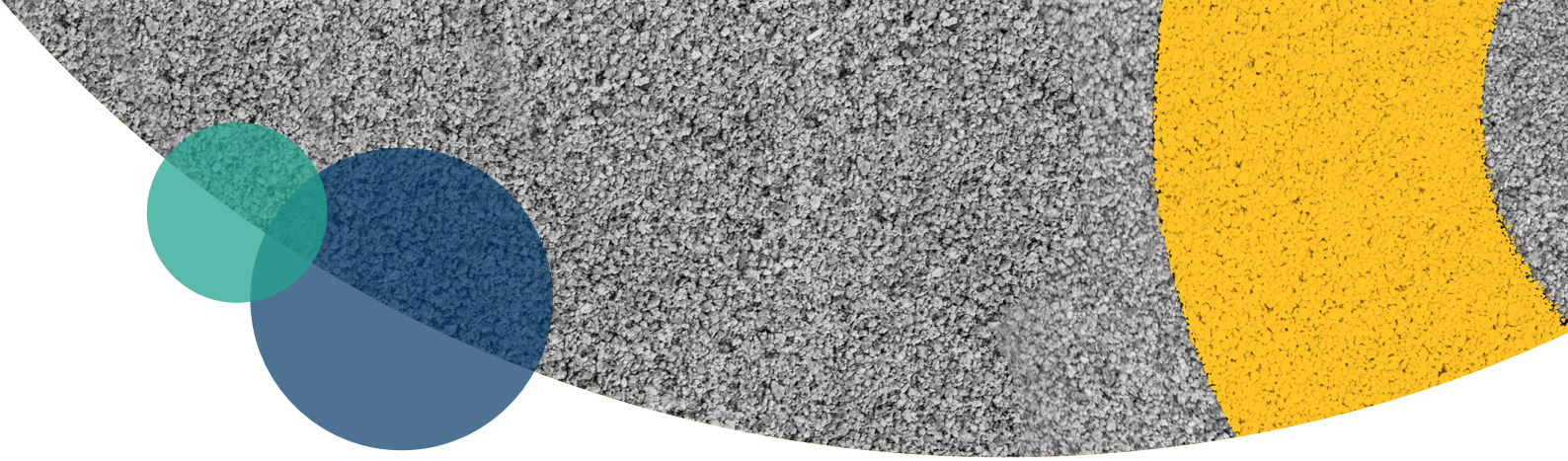
Please note that we will not fund the LPC or reimburse LPC fees that have already been paid. We currently support both qualification routes within our Training Contract programme, however our recruitment and development processes are reviewed regularly and this approach may be subject to change in the future.

Q: What are the qualification requirements to apply?

A: To be eligible for our 2029 Training Contract, you must have achieved, or be predicted to achieve a 2:1 undergraduate degree, and meet one of the criteria below:

- You are currently studying (in your penultimate or final year) or have completed a law degree in England, Wales, or Northern Ireland
- You are currently studying (in your final year) or have completed a non-law degree in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland
- You are currently studying (in your final year) or have completed a non-law degree in Scotland
- You are in your final year of or have completed an international qualifying law degree

In addition to this, to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales, you will need to meet the SRA's qualification requirements. This will usually include completing the SQE (unless you have already completed the LPC). In addition, non-law graduates joining our training contract programme will be required to complete the PGDL before commencing the SQE. As explained in this document, WBD can fund the PGDL and SQE, where required.



Q: If I've not yet completed the PGDL, is there a specific provider I need to use?

A: Yes. Where we're funding the PGDL, this will be through our preferred provider, the University of Law.

Q: I'm a non-law student, can I apply?

A: Yes. We welcome applications from non-law students. If you are offered a training contract and need to complete the PGDL before starting, we will fund this and provide a maintenance grant.

Q: What happens if I have already completed the SQE1 / SQE2?

A: If you have already completed one or both SQE assessments, we will discuss your position with you as part of the offer process. Please note that we do not provide retrospective reimbursement for SQE assessments, preparation courses or other postgraduate qualifications that have already been completed or paid for.

Q: What happens if I already have qualifying work experience?

A: If you already have qualifying work experience, any decision about whether this can reduce the length of your training contract will depend on a number of factors, including business need, your development and the requirements of the firm at the relevant time. The maximum length of time your training contract could be reduced by is 6 months, but this will depend on a number of factors.

Q: Who is responsible for enrolling on SQE courses and booking SQE exams?

A: You will be responsible for enrolling on your SQE preparation course(s) and booking your SQE assessments. We will fund the relevant course and exam costs, subject to the terms of our policy, but we do not enrol candidates or book assessments on their behalf.

Q: Can I choose which SQE course route I take?

A: Yes. You can choose the course route that best suits your circumstances, provided it allows you to complete the SQE assessments before your agreed training contract start date. Our preparation provider is the University of Law.

Q: What support is available if I need reasonable adjustments?

A: We will support individuals who require reasonable adjustments. If you think you may need reasonable adjustments to during our recruitment process, please speak to the Early Talent team as early as possible so that we can best support you.

Application Requirements – for our WBD Edinburgh office

Q: I am applying for a Training Contract in Edinburgh, how does the SQE affect me?

A: The SQE route does not apply to our Scottish trainees. If you are applying for a traineeship in Edinburgh, you will need to follow the Scottish qualification route, including the Diploma in Professional Legal Practice. We will fund the DPLP course fees for Scottish future trainees, subject to our policy. To be eligible for our 2029 Training Contract in Edinburgh, you must have achieved, or be predicted to achieve a 2:1 undergraduate degree, and meet one of the criteria below:

- You are currently studying (in your penultimate or final year) or have completed a law degree in Scotland
- You have completed a non-law degree and you have started (or completed) the accelerated LLB in Scottish Law
- You have completed an international degree and you have started (or completed) the accelerated LLB in Scottish Law

(You can find more information on the Law Society of Scotland website lawscot.org.uk).

You would join the rest of the cohort to complete training contract and will be integrated into our development programme.

Grants and Funding

Q: Will the SQE prep courses and exams be funded by the firm?

A: Yes, WBD will fund SQE preparation course fees and SQE examination costs, subject to the terms of our policy. Our chosen provider for SQE preparation courses is the University of Law. You may also be eligible for a maintenance grant of up to £8,000 while completing your studies, subject to the terms of our policy.

Q: Will you fund the PGDL and will I receive a Maintenance Grant?

A: Yes. If you are a non-law graduate and have not yet started the PGDL when you receive your training contract offer, WBD will fund the PGDL and provide a maintenance grant of up to £8,000, subject to the terms of our policy.

Q: For Edinburgh, will you fund the Diploma in Professional Legal Practice and will I receive a Maintenance Grant?

A: Yes. WBD will fund the DPLP course fees for Scottish future trainees, subject to our policy. You may also be eligible for a maintenance grant of up to £8,000, again subject to our policy. Scottish trainees may choose their preferred DPLP provider, but the course, provider and costs must be approved by the firm before enrolling.

Q: When is the maintenance grant paid?

A: Maintenance grants are normally paid as a single lump sum approximately two weeks before the start date of the relevant course, subject to eligibility and the terms of the firm's funding arrangements.

Q: I don't yet have the LPC, will you fund this for me so I don't have to sit the SQE exams?

A: No. WBD will not fund the LPC. If you have not already completed the LPC, WBD will support the relevant SQE preparation courses and assessments, and PGDL for non-law students.

Q: Will WBD reimburse me if I have already paid for a course or exam?

A: WBD does not usually reimburse fees for SQE assessments, preparation courses, the LPC or other postgraduate qualifications that have already been completed or paid for before sponsorship is agreed.

The Programme

Q: When will my qualifying work experience start (for our England offices)?

A: Your qualifying work experience will start when you begin your two-year training contract with us. Your SQE preparation will take place before this, and you will need to complete the required SQE assessments before your agreed training contract start date.

Q: How long is the Training Contract (England) / Traineeship (Scotland)?

A: In England, you will complete a two-year training contract with us, in addition to any required SQE preparation before you start. In Scotland, the traineeship is also two years.

Q: How many seats will I do?

A: You will complete four seats, each lasting six months, during your training contract or traineeship. Please note that trainees undertaking their traineeship in our Edinburgh office are likely to undertake a double Real Estate seat as part of their traineeship.

Q: Will I have a choice of seats?

A: We will ask you about your seat preferences and will do our best to take these into account. We also need to balance individual preferences with business need and the opportunities available in each office at the time. Our aim is to give you a rounded training experience across your two years. Second year trainees are prioritised for their seat preferences and please note that seat choices do vary depending on office location.

SQE and resits

Q: What is our approach to resits for future trainees who are being supported through the SQE?

A: We understand that exam results can be difficult, and we will support you if you do not pass SQE1 or SQE2 on the first attempt. We will review each case individually, taking into account your engagement, attendance, preparation, assessment performance, any relevant circumstances and business need. Where appropriate, we may support one resit for SQE1 and one resit for SQE2, but this will be considered on a case-by-case basis and is not automatic.

SQE Qualification – for our WBD England offices

Degree or equivalent

UK degree or qualifying international law degree
For non-Law students, a PGDL to be completed before the Training Contract commences

SQE assessments

Enrol onto the relevant preparation course and create an SQE assessment candidate account

Sit and pass both SQE1 and SQE2 assessments before the Training Contract commences

Qualifying work experience

Complete two years of qualifying work experience during the Training Contract

Apply for admission and qualify

Apply for screening and get your results

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